

Today's News - Tuesday, November 17, 2009

- Everyone maxed out on Hadid's Maxxi: Glancey: it's "her best work yet" and "a brave project"; Dyckhoff: it's "delirious, magnificent, a sculpture to inhabit...the very definition of iconic"; Merrick: "stunning."
- Not to be outdone, Woodman finds Caruso St John's Nottingham Contemporary "an extraordinary building"; and Long says getting the details right gives it "a sense of fineness and quality that is rare in this country."
- Three L.A. cities vie for Eli Broad's expanded museum plans - and his promise to hire "an internationally renowned architect."
- Kamin gives (mostly) thumbs-up to University of Chicago's building spree: "the surge of construction as a whole is praiseworthy," but for "all their individual distinction," it doesn't "come close to making a coherent or lively place."
- An architectural historian explains why Dutch mosque design is misunderstood, eroding the freedom to express one's religious identity in the Netherlands.
- Is suburbia really the new utopia?
- A new eco-friendly library in Silver Lake, CA, fits into its historic neighborhood - and still appeals to its "hip demographic."
- An eye-ful of the winning design for King's Cross gasometer (and the runners-up).
- Nevada architects launch "Pencil Ready Projects" program to steer stimulus money toward design work: "Contractors know that if we aren't drawing, they aren't building."
- Outgoing CBE chief calls for architects to resign from bad schemes to prevent bad buildings being built (like that's gonna happen).
- BD's Baillieu and her climate change arguments stir up a firestorm of responses (with links to most of them).
- Also sure to stir things up: CTBUH changes height criteria, changing some notable buildings' rankings.
- We can never resist San Diego Architectural Foundation's Orchids & Onions awards - "Oscars and Razzies for the built environment" (one Onion gets "a citation for disturbing the peace").
- Call for entries: 6th European Prize for Urban Public Space.

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Zaha Hadid's stairway into the future: With its swooping curves, impossible angles and haunting views, Maxxi is her best work yet...she hopes it will be fashion-proof...has reserved her architectural firepower for the interior...This is a brave project, and little short of incredible... By Jonathan Glancey [slide show]- Guardian (UK)

Zaha Hadid's museum opens in Rome: Designed in 1999, Hadid's Maxxi building is still incomplete as Rome's grandiose building plans grind to a halt...this building needs no dramatising...It is delirious, magnificent, a sculpture to inhabit — a phantasmagoric landscape...Put art inside, though, and I fear the building might explode...the very definition of iconic. By Tom Dyckhoff- The Times (UK)

Zaha hits Rome: ...€150m Maxxi museum of contemporary art is up, and stunning...the well spring, the scribbled DNA that has informed Hadid's later work...The weird thing about Maxxi is the way it so vividly relates to her early student drawings, yet also demonstrates a move away from them. By Jay Merrick- Independent (UK)

Caruso St John's Nottingham curtain raiser: The dramatic green and gold facades of the Nottingham Contemporary art gallery are an outward expression of its relationship with the city...an extraordinary building that not only accommodates such moments but gives them a privileged place within the collective drama of the city. By Ellis Woodman [images]- BD/Building Design (UK)

Nottingham Contemporary art gallery: ...pays an elegant homage to its lacemaking heritage...While it is by no means perfect, the time taken by the architect to get details right gives this building a sense of fineness and quality that is rare in this country. By Kieran Long -- Caruso St John [images, link to Adam Caruso essay]- The Architects' Journal (UK)

Eli Broad expands plans for his Westside museum: Beverly Hills, Santa Monica and a third, unnamed Westside location are vying to be the contemporary art institution's home...would hire "an internationally renowned architect."- Los Angeles Times

With a new dorm, plans for an arts center and other projects, the University of Chicago builds a bridge across the moat of the Midway: ...the surge of construction as a whole is praiseworthy...For all their individual distinction, however, these and other buildings don't come close to making a coherent or lively place. By Blair Kamin -- Krueck & SextonOWP/IP; Helmut Jahn; Goody Clancy; Tod Williams Billie Tsien; James Carpenter; Ross Barney Associates [images, links]- Chicago Tribune

Dutch mosque design misunderstood: Traditional mosques...express unwillingness to integrate. That is what Dutch people often think. But research by architectural historian Eric Roose shows that those who commission the design of Dutch mosques only want to express what Islamic movement they belong to. [images]- Radio Netherlands

Suburbia: the new utopia? After years of sneery criticism, old prejudices about the suburbs are being replaced with the notion that they are a source of pride...these much maligned outposts are actually great places.- Guardian (UK)

New Silver Lake library designed with community in mind: The sleek, eco-friendly structure fits in with the neighborhood's historic architecture and hip demographic. -- M2A Milofsky Michali & Cox Architects- Los Angeles Times

Bell Phillips + Kimble scoop King's Cross gasometer contest: Up-and-coming London-based outfit... 'imaginative' events space proposal, which includes a water pool and amphitheatre, beat four other finalists -- Feix & Merlin; Gustafson Porter; Hakes Associates; Loop Architecture [images]- The Architects' Journal (UK)

Filling the Void: Architects push 'pencil-ready' stimulus projects as large-scale construction projects wind down...Greater, more sustainable long-term job creation can be realized through design investment..."Contractors know that if we aren't drawing, they aren't building" -- Poggemeyer Design Group; Tate Snyder Kimsey Architects; Pugsley Simpson Coulter Architects; SH Architecture; Carpenter Sellers Architects- Las Vegas Business Press

Architects should resign from bad schemes, says outgoing Cbe chairman John Sorrell...to prevent bad buildings being built...claimed these new architectural values would help enable the UK to progress from an age of anxiety to an era of delight.- BD/Building Design (UK)

Building Design editor attempts to demolish climate change argument: Amanda Baillieu has laid bare her utter contempt for environmentalism but failed to construct a solid argument...Naturally enough, rival magazine Architects' Journal issued a repost..."Amanda Baillieu's BD editorial is full of hot air" [links]- Guardian (UK)

CTBUH changes height criteria: Burj Dubai height increases...previous description of where to measure tall building height from — "Height is measured from the sidewalk outside the main entrance to..." is now no longer sufficient. [images]- Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat (CTBUH)

Orchids & Onions: Modesty spoke louder than monuments in this year's crop of San Diego's versions of the Oscars and

Razzies for the built environment. -- Lloyd Russell; S2 Architecture; KMA Architecture/Davis Davis; Urban Design Group; Safdie Rabines; Rinehart Herbst; Miller Hull; WLC Architects; HDR; Bejan Arfaa; Deneed Powell Atelier/Dugmore Design Studio; Studio E; Hanna Gabriel Wells; Bundy Thompson; Bells & Whistles - San Diego Union-Tribune

Call for entries: European Prize for Urban Public Space: biennial competition organized by six European institutions to recognize and encourage the recovery projects and defense of public space; deadline: January 29, 2010- Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona (CCCB)



-- Tadao Ando: Punta della Dogana, Francois Pinault Foundation, Venice, Italy
-- Book: "Eye of the Leopard" by Dereck Joubert & Beverly Joubert

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